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VIEWPOINT

NO. 1

November 14, 1963

VIEWPOINT has as its purpose the stimulation of intellectual and spiritual "give and take" within the theological community. It is to be a sounding board of faculty and student opinion on issues which confront the community. It will be published as often as current and pertinent issues arise.

It is not the purpose of VIEWPOINT to be a scholarly or literary masterpiece - but rather a medium through which students and faculty members can speak on pertinent issues as they arise. It is important that issues which are being discussed not be confined to classrooms, faculty offices, dormitories or hallways. The entire community should be aware of the diversity of opinions on current problems. VIEWPOINT offers the opportunity for these to be voiced.

We do not seek polished, journalistically perfect articles, which take more time than the average student or Professor can afford to take. It merely seeks personal opinion voiced in simplicity. However, this goal can only be realized if those who have the opinions speak up - YOU. Contributions can be made to any one of the undersigned or at the office of the Assistant to the President.

Howard Friend

Dwyn Mounger

Marlynn May

Charles Conti

STUDENT COUNCIL COMMITTEES

This year the Student Council is seeking as far as possible to be of service to the community life of the seminary. For this purpose a number of committees have been established to channel student opinion and action. The committees exist for the student body, so please make your suggestions and comments known to them. They are as follows:

1. The Academic Committee. Chairman, Roger Hull. The purpose of this committee is to represent student opinion to the faculty concerning academic and curricular matters and to sponsor student-faculty communication in general.
2. The Christian Faith and Life Committee. The chairman of this committee is Ron Kangas. It is primarily concerned with the development of the spiritual life of the seminary community.
3. The Social Committee. Chairman, Dave Rogge. This committee is concerned with the social life of the community and seeks to sponsor such activities as will be of service to our corporate life.
4. The Christian Outreach Committee. The co-chairmen of this committee are John Bowe and Lloyd Evans. It is concerned with all interest groups of the seminary and matters pertaining to our corporate outreach and witness.

An opportunity to attend the AFL-CIO national convention in New York, Nov. 18th, is being offered by the Church and Society Committee. On that day, in conjunction with the labor convention, a ONE-DAY SEMINARY CONFERENCE is planned. Its purpose is to give seminary students and professors an opportunity to observe the convention in session and a chance to hear outstanding labor leaders, as well as nationally known religious leaders who specialize in industrial relations. Those who are interested in attending are urged to watch the weekly and daily bulletins for further information.

-----REMEMBER, NOV. 18th.

Recently Dr. William F. Graham (better known in more informal settings than Princeton as Billy Graham) talked to and with a large number of seminary students, faculty, and their friends. The theme of his talk was based on the concept of "renewal" within the Church. He suggested six areas in which this is necessary: 1) we need a renewal in authoritative preaching - the minister has side stepped this responsibility and Graham called for a return to expository preaching; 2) a renewal in experiential Christianity - Christianity is a form of action and we should put it to work; 3) a renewal in disciplined living - this includes the areas of study; prayer life, our own body, and above all the Church; 4) a renewal of what we believe - we need to feel our religion more, put "fire" into it as well as intellectual competence; 5) a renewal in eschatological emphasis - the Communists say that they are going to create a heaven here on earth, but Christianity has not proclaimed its message of eternal life forcefully enough; 6) a renewal of courage - men who stand up for what Christianity is and stands for; this applies to the ministry and the laity.

As is very evident; these are by no means new ideas and Graham would be the first to admit this fact; but, he does present them in a positive attitude with great humility before his Lord. He has been accused of being too simple in that he says he preaches the gospel and lets the remainder to the Holy Spirit. This may be a truism, but at the same time he opposes the attempt of some who would make Christianity negative and intellectual. It seems to me that his simplicity cannot be discounted, for he has not let negativism or intellectualism get in the way of his commitment to the gospel or the working of the Holy Spirit.

On the other hand, we have been experiencing, in a class on Christian witness, an extreme negativism. The foundations have been completely torn from under the Church, the total irrelevancy of anything which the Church does has been emphasized, and finally all forms of mass evangelism were tossed out the second story window as playing into the hands of fear, frustration, and hysteria. With it went any work which the Holy Spirit has done or could do in evangelism. Any workings of the Holy Spirit which did not neatly fit into a preconceived form of operation were classified as magical. I would be the first to agree that the Church has failed at many points to be an effective witness to the world and perhaps also that this is a courageous attempt to analyze the Church's failings; but, it is extremely irritating to observe and be the recipient of such negativism. Thus far it has given no answers. A more positive approach to a negative situation would be better.

Let's hope that there will be some reconstruction done and some hints given as to what the Church ought to be doing to gain the "freedom" which it needs to work in this world. Meanwhile, perhaps we should not be so hasty to cast out Graham's philosophy of the sincere preaching of the Word, with the Holy Spirit working before, during, and after; complete devotion to the gospel; and sincere humility before our Lord.

Marlynn L. May

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GROUP CHOOSES PRINCETON SEMINARY FOR PILOT PROJECT

Princeton Seminary is the setting for an important pilot project of the World Student Christian Federation. Attending the International Study Fellowship on the University Ministry are delegates from 17 countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and North and South America. Executive secretary of the program is Miss Margaret Flory.

Plans for the study project were approved by the executive committee of the W.S.C.F. in Nairobi, Kenya, last January. It is an attempt to meet the pressing need for university Christian leadership in the face of the tremendous expansion and change taking place in higher education throughout the world.

The group of 22 participants, each nominated by his national Student Christian Movement, includes pastors, staff members, teachers, and students. They came to Princeton in mid-September and will remain for a period of concentrated study until the end of January. Then each person will be assigned a place of in-service training under the supervision of a qualified counsellor-director at a university center in North America, Latin America, or Europe.

The study fellowship is not only international but interfaith as well. In addition to Protestant participants, the Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition is represented by Mrs. Stanley Kallaur of the Russian Orthodox Church in the U.S.A., and Mr. Mesrob Ashjian of Antelias, Lebanon, a teacher and librarian of the Theological Seminary of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

The fellowship's program of study includes a seminar on "Church, Nation, and Culture in Relation to the University," led by a sociologist, Dr. Toyomasu Fuse of Japan, and a theologian, Dr. Charles West of the faculty of Princeton Seminary. The Rev. Ely Mapanao of the Philippines, resident director of the study fellowship, leads the group in a study of Colossians. Dr. M. Richard Shaull, of the U.S.A. and Brazil, is in charge of a seminar on the University Ministry. In addition, each member has chosen a lecture course or seminar, according to his special field or interest, from the curricula of either Princeton University or Princeton Seminary.

The program is not only an experiment in study but in living together as well. Members are housed in a seminary-owned home on Stockton Street. On Tuesday evenings they share a meal as a group in the Small Dining Room of the Campus Center.

According to the Rev. Mapanao, there is widespread international interest in the outcome of the study fellowship. Already the East Asia Christian Conference has asked for a similar program to be held in their area next year. Mapanao maintains that Christians everywhere are realizing that the era of the "big meetings" is over. They are finding that much more is accomplished by small groups in which there can be a maximum of participation by each member. The results of the Princeton pilot project will determine the structure and methods of future international Christian student seminars.

VIEWPOINT

NO. 2

November 27, 1963

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

President of the United States, 1960-1963

"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori"

O God of Earth and Altar, we turn to Thee in this moving hour in our nation's destiny when events too great for feeble hearts have caught us unawares. We are like tossing fragments upon rebellious seas and we crave a strong and constant bond to hold us fast. We waver as we come to Thee for so often when skies were sunny and days were fair we forgot that we were mortal and we failed to name Thee in the praises of our hearts. Forgive us for our wilfullness and for our readiness to plan within the poor sufficiency of our human wisdom. Turn us not away, O God of mercy; touch us with Thy hand and in the nearness of Thy pardon may our spirits dare to hope again.

O God in Heaven, who hath raised up men commensurate with the challenge of each hour, we bless Thee for the devotion of Thy brave public servant whose tragic passing has crushed for a time the nation's spirit. We remember with gladness his brilliant mind and buoyant heart, his high vision for the country's welfare, and his eagerness to seize new frontiers that were broad and far. We rejoice in knowing that what he received by heritage he claimed as rights for others and that he could not shrink from reaching over barriers to clasp estranged hands. O Thou before whom the generations fall and rise, we thank Thee that thine assurance supports us even in the dark and that Thy purposes continue in spite of the senseless deeds of men.

O Father of men and nations, whose steady hand has led Thy people across each lesser Calvary, we commit afresh our hopes and times into the keeping of Thine eternal Spirit. Grant us Thy patience to live each day only to Thee. Lend us courage to seek and hold to what is true. Give us fearless eyes to see beyond today another sunrise and a better task to do.

O valiant heart, who to your glory came
Through dust of conflict and through battle flame;
Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved,
Your memory hallowed in the land you loved.

Now unto him who is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Father, be glory forever and ever. Amen

THANKSGIVING--AN AMERICAN TRADITION
by Dwyn Mounger

Thanksgiving Day is an American tradition: the feast of the fatted turkey, the joy of table fellowship with loved ones and friends, the sights and sounds and smells of autumn, the scurry and crunch of fallen leaves trodden underfoot, the thrill of last-of-the-season football games, the frosty trip to the crowded church, and the strains of "Come, Ye Thankful People. . . ."

What is the purpose of all this? The late President Kennedy in this year's Thanksgiving Day Proclamation (probably the last official address he ever made to the American people as a whole) stated: "On that day let us gather in sanctuaries dedicated to worship and in homes blessed by family affection to express our gratitude for the glorious gifts of God; and let us earnestly and humbly pray that he will continue to guide and sustain us in the great unfinished tasks of achieving peace, justice, and understanding among all men and nations and of ending misery and suffering wherever they exist."

When was the first Thanksgiving service held on these shores? If the Roman Catholic mass is regarded as eucharistia, it can be said that the first such exercises were celebrated by priests who accompanied the sixteenth-century Spanish conquistadores in their explorations of what is today the southern and southwestern United States.

It was in Virginia, however, that the first official English-language Thanksgiving service in the New World took place. At Berkeley Plantation, on the banks of the James River, a group of newly arrived colonists, on December 4, 1619, gave thanks to God for a safe passage.

Two years later, far to the northeast in Plymouth Colony, Gov. William Bradford appointed a time of feasting and thanksgiving to observe the successful harvest. For three days the Pilgrims, who in spite of their austerity were hearty tipplers, celebrated with considerable gusto. Apparently they made Plymouth "ROCK"!

This was the beginning of the traditional annual American November harvest festival, Thanksgiving Day. The seventeenth-century colonists, faced daily with extreme hardships, dangers, and death itself, were not inclined to take their blessings for granted. On their days of thanks they poured out their hearts in gratitude to the God who was their only hope for day-to-day existence.

One may question today, however, if the average American Christian--flabby, affluent, "secure"--possesses even the ability to be genuinely thankful. To many men the greatest threat is not hostile Indians, but cholesterol; the gravest danger, not a failure of the crops, but a failure on the stock market. In a land where surplus grain literally fills city streets, because inadequate barns have not yet been torn down and replaced by greater ones, it is extremely difficult to keep Thanksgiving from being a pharisaical "pat-on-the-back."

What is true thanksgiving? One of the greatest examples in history is that of the burgers of Leiden, the Netherlands, in 1574. For months they had courageously resisted the seige of their city by the Spanish Duke of Alva. With their food supply exhausted, they were forced to subsist on dogs and cats. But they refused to surrender. When relief finally came, they were almost starved to death. Yet "all to a man" crawled or staggered as best they could to the "kerk." "There on their knees they gave thanks to God. But when they tried to utter their gratitude in psalms of praise they were almost voiceless, for there was no strength left in them, and the tones of their song died away in grateful sobbing and weeping." --- --- --- --- --- THAT IS REAL THANKSGIVING!

To my fellow Christians at Princeton Theological Seminary

a christian among the christians

it chills me,
the stillness.
it frightens me,
the mask of faces,
the crowd.
it kills me,
the food.
yes, I swallow it all,
all at once
shutting all my senses.
just to swell my stomach.
an eating machine!
Until you gagged me.
my throat ceases to convulse
it chokes
and spits into a scream:
"hi, here I am"
in a seminary or cemetery?

an alien

pek hien liang
International Study Fellowship

In a previous issue of Viewpoint, Marlynn May stated that Dr. Graham, in his visit to our campus, opposed "some who would make Christianity negative and intellectual." This was interpreted to mean a kind of negativism and intellectualism, which many students feel is the impact of the class on Christian Witness.

While not an expert on Dr. Graham's opinions (along with many other things!), I would like to comment on the issue of criticism. Certainly, few of us would want to condone any 'ism' which makes a fetish out of a genuinely legitimate activity. And it may be agreed that judgment easily is transmuted into judgmentalism, and scholarly discipline into a vapid intellectualism. When (if) this happens, a protest may legitimately be raised by the Christian community. God's determination of our existence is that we be human as Christ was human. At the very least this humanity implies a naturalness and balance uncongenial to any 'ism.' The New Testament describes the mind of Christ which should be in us as 'obedience' - and this means integration of all of life around the purpose of God. Since no particular human function can be overly accented at the expense of others, no rigid 'ism' may be allowed to control and color genuinely Christian life.

However, it belongs to Christian obedience to be both negative and intellectual in their place. St. Paul could be both - out of a prior commitment to the Gospel of Christ. And neither stance is an end in itself, as a kind of spiritual masochism or a pride of wisdom! (If we made either of them an end in itself, we would simply be substituting our own idol for another's.) But, in their proper place, both have a role to play. An obedient hearing of the Word of God may (and does) lead to a radical relativising of all human structures - Criticism - in order to press on to an affirmation of the Gospel. And a genuine intellectual grappling with the problems presented by such 'outsiders' as Hume, Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, Durkheim, and Freud may (and does) lead to a more adequate formulation of the provisional witness we are called upon to be in these days. The edge must never be blunted if our witness is to be genuinely obedient.

It seems to me that the epithet "intellectualism and negativism" in reference to such an effort is dangerous, since it may lead to a refusal to put ourselves in the exposed posture in which Christ calls us to be His witnesses. It may indicate a desire to de-accent that which God is leading us to accent in order to focus our thought and life on the potentialities of Christian Witness in a Secular World. If it is this, then does such a complaint indicate "complete devotion to the Gospel; and sincere humility before our Lord"??

A genuine simplicity of faith and life is not reductionist. It doesn't seek to eliminate this or that irritating dimension of life. It will orient each task in its natural place around a disciplined commitment to Christ. And if Criticism or Intelligence be called for, it will not shrink from the most radical criticism or penetrating intellectual endeavor. In fact, just because the Christian knows his justification proceeds from Christ and not from his own piety, or virtue, or plainness, he can live through the fires of negation and not perish. He can see all his most revered structures called into question without being defensive (or blasé). He knows that the Christian Church is a provisional, not final, form of the witness to the grace of God. Its only foundation is outside itself: the reconciliation of the world to God accomplished in Jesus Christ. When criticism of the Church is made on the way to a more adequate understanding of its true foundation, and hence of its forms of witness, it seems quite consistent with a vital faith and quite in order in a theological seminary.

Thomas Parker

With reference to the first issue of Viewpoint, November 14, 1963, I would like to commend Marlynn May on the service he rendered in presenting the outline of Dr. Graham's remarks. I would say that, in the main, these remarks were reported faithfully and the conclusions drawn were in accord with what would seem to be the consistent intent of Dr. Graham's remarks to the Princeton Seminary community and, indeed, in his continuing world-wide ministry. The one impression that I received, however, in the total article, exclusive of remarks concerning the class on Christian witness, was that the pivotal or focal point of the brief message was somehow missed. This, of course, could have been done inadvertently. If it would be proper, a brief outline might aid in remembering the main points of the three-point address:

1. A call for Authoritative Preaching
2. A need for Personal Relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ
3. A renewed emphasis on the Exchatalogical aspects of the Gospel

The second point of the address seemed to be the intended heart of his message, the nexus between the first and last main points. The article, as written, seemed to reduce this challenge to seek relationship with a Living Lord to a challenge to a personal relationship to the Gospel. If Mr. May sees the former as being synonymous with the latter, there is no cause for disagreement. If, on the other hand, there is intended or implied in Marlynn's remarks a commitment to the Gospel apart from a concomitant relationship to the Author, it would seem there is need to reconsider Graham's remarks. The thrust of Graham's second point was that those who are not in personal relationship to Jesus Christ have no gospel to proclaim. However, we could consider Paul's remarks to the Philippian church in the first chapter of that epistle where he indicates that there are those who proclaim the gospel out of "partisanship" but yet praises God that His Word is proclaimed in spite of the attitude of the persons involved. It would seem that Graham's second point was an exhortation to consider one's own relationship to Jesus Christ perhaps so as to avoid a similar difficulty. There is ample Scriptural evidence to indicate that spiritual truth is not attained by the unaided human intellect and Graham's remarks seemed to underscore this truth.

In considering the other article which seemingly was a rejection of mass evangelism and a defense of the presentments of the course which both writers must share in their schedule, my own comments and reactions are concerning the former. The article seemed to be critical of two things: methodology and message content. The writer gives the impression both that he did not hear Dr. Graham, although he might very well have, and of a certain lack of indication of knowledge of Scripture which I am more than sure is at his command.

As to the methodology of mass evangelism, those who were at the meeting in the Campus Center, for the most part, were made aware of problems of Graham's efforts in particular and mass evangelism in general. Dr. Graham mentioned the Parable of the Sower as indicative of the situation which occurs when persons are invited to respond. It would seem that few, if any, dedicated persons called to be evangelists ever trust in the beauty of a particular technique or method. The principle method of salvation as indicated in John 1:12b, 13, "he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (RSV), and in the third chapter of John precludes satisfaction with methodology. The reference to success was in poor taste and overlooks the demand of God to be obedient and faithful in the proclamation of His Truth in Christ rather than to be desirous of success or to see results.

The message content of the evangelist is, by the very nature of that particular calling, limited. The evangelist proclaims the "ABC's" of the faith, if you will, and who would have it otherwise? You do not begin feeding the newborn baby with steak. Milk is usually prescribed. Spiritually, the same principle exists, e.g. 1 Peter 2:2,3 and Hebrews 5:12-14.

The references to the "meatgrinder" experience and the stereotyped believer fall short of defending this particular questioning of this office or calling of evangelism. Undoubtedly many a Pharisee concluded the same sort of thing about our Lord and probably attacked Him on the grounds that He led people out into the wilderness and then used the psychological devices of the moment, hunger and mass meetings, to present His

(continued on the following page)

message favorably. Even the most casually informed person sees a great diversity in not only the individuals who respond but, also, in factors which lead to response in any "crusade" or meeting whether in our day or in that of our Lord's earthly ministry. As to this fear of dehumanization due to believers becoming stereotyped, it might be well to suggest the reading of comments of some of these persons affected by the mass evangelistic approach. I think, if anything, the majority of such persons would attest to a change to reality rather than away from it.

The reference to dismay over "merely preaching the simple story of Jesus" reminds one of Paul's remarks in 2 Corinthians 11:3 pertaining to the simplicity which is in Christ (tns aplohtntos tns eis Xriston.) The reference to the Holy Spirit as "it" perhaps can be substantiated from the Greek text but seems to be a carry-over from the KJV and reduces the Third Person of the Trinity to some sort of ghostly apparition.

The comment concerning success, again, does not seem to fit a true Scriptural concept of the nature of the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the statement "It was an unpredictable success" is viewed in the light of the Kenosis passage of Philippians 2:7ff. and the Gospel narratives, such an expression from a rather poetic second paragraph does not seem to fit the facts. It might also be suggested that terms such as the "popularity" of our message be viewed in light of the fact that roughly 80 per cent of our high schoolers couldn't really care less about the Gospel as proclaimed within a "program" rather than "person" oriented institutional church approach, or in light of much "lip-service" and nominal affiliation on the part of many adults within the church, or, more importantly, in light of such narratives of our Lord as that in John 15:18-27 concerning the offense of the cross.

Lest the remarks of this consideration become unduly harsh it would be good to remember the basic presupposition that this article is personal opinion also and Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 8:1b,2 "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know."

But the problem here expressed seems to be that of desiring concreteness and relevancy from a mass evangelistic approach in this article by Mr. Conti, and yet a certain refusal to accept any examples of lives that exhibit such as result of change in these meetings. The question then which comes to mind is: Is his entire article merely argument for its own sake? And if so: Is it worth it?

Perhaps the best evaluation would be that of God the Holy Spirit as He wrote through the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:20-25:

"Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and weakness of God is stronger than men." (RSV)

Gary G. Neikirk

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Howard Friend

Dwyn Mounger

Marlynn May

Charles Conti

Mother Dust Is Movin'
(Requiem For A Fundamentalist)

"I'm not really the one ta ask. Ask them folks that's out on the road with their trucks piled high an; heading for the pot at the end os that dusty rainbow. What you reporters hanging round for anyhow? Ain't nothing ta write about round here.

"Wha'd you say? Wind's blowing pretty good. Cain't hear. Well, it's real simple Mr. Reporter look up in the air. See that dust. That's where our future is. It's up in the air. Makes a man sick ta see it; don't it. God's green earth dried up an; floating away. A man overworks what God gives him, he takes it away an' gives it ta someone else. How long you been here, boy?

"Two days? Two days ain't long enough ta know what's going on. I been here, me an' my wife, for thirty-four years come next March. Seems like two thousand. What's the matter? Boy, you're going ta die of consumption, if you don't put a handkerchief over your mouth. You'll cough your guts up dry.

"No, your little white hanky ain't big enough. Take this one, an' tie it round back of your head. Here, let me help you. What?

"How do I feel 'bout this dry spell? I already told you. Look up in the air at that sun barely coming through that dust cloud. This was good land boy, giving food an' nourishment to many folks. Every year, right out there. Far as you can see. Every year, the corn an' wheat coming up like a green lake, seeping up through the furrows I cut in that black dirt. That's the Gospel truth. Every year I've seen them fields reaching for them puffy clouds an' tickling the bottom side of the breeze. This was good land, boy.

"Sure. I'll tell you what happened. This is God's way with his land. We ain't had no rain for - Let's see, (don't like to remember) - for 'bout - going on nine months. Less God opens up them heavenly windows an' pours us out a blessing, we ain't going ta have nothing ta bless.

"Folks been moving outa here by the dozens. But Ma an' me an' some others well, we been here many a year an' don't have no place to start out for. So this here old place is going ta have ta put up with us a mite longer, I guess.

"You ask that like you don't think it will. Sure it's going ta rain. But you wouldn't think the land knew it, would you? This old dirt is rearing up galloping off East. It's like it jus' jumped up in the air an' says, 'So long it's been bad ta know ya.' I guess, this old dirt's got a right ta move on, when it wants. It's been worked long an' treated mean like some of the black folks down South on the big farms. Lots of folks don't believe in old mother dirt no more. I don't know...Seems like folks don't know where they's from. They's deserting what gived them life. So this old mother dust days, 'So long it's been bad ta know ya.' You know, like the old song 'cept bad 'stead of good.

"No. Not many believes it's going ta rain; not even old mother dirt here. She's moving on ta settle some place else. Ithink this here valley is being punished for wasting an' over working the land. I guess most folks thought it couldn't grow anything but one kind of crop. Nobody gived it a chance ta rest an' get new life. Didn't even do any rotating like the government man said. A man's gotta pay for his sins. Trouble is the young folks is what it really hurts. Nothing left 'cept a long journey ta nowhere. Maybe the City, that's worse...like giving them ta the devil.

"What's bad 'bout it? Cus they ain't never coming back. I don't understand these young folks. They act almost eager for a drought so's they could move on to new ground. Boy, they's some folks that don't even know how it feels ta cut a clean furrow or even smell a hay loft. I'm telling you the truth. Some folks don't even know 'bout milking a cow an' what it feels like ta grab hold early in the morning an' squirt that old bucket full. Them City folks think that milk's something ta buy in a carton, one of these waxy boxes. Boy, it's something ta pray about an' give thanks for.

"I went ta visit my brother last year down ta Houston. He's doing right well. Works for a trucking company. Has a right nice house an' everything... Look at that dust go. What was I saying? OH, yeah. We all sat down ta thank the Lord for the dinner. I think they did it cuz we was there. I'm sure he didn't know whether ta thank the cans for the food or the Lord. Seems like even table grace don't mean nothing in the City much less old mother dust. What?

"It will! I don't like that kind of talk, boy. It's going ta rain. You're too young an can-fed ta know 'bout whether it's going ta rain or not. When the Lord is done doing what he's doing here, it'll pour buckets full. It'll rain, boy. It'll rain.

"Sure. It'll be soon enough. I wouldn't stay on, if I didn't think I'd see corn sprouting again. A man doesn't stop believing in his land when it doesn't rain for a little while. A man's gotta believe in the land that's fed him an' raised four little ones ta grow'd people. Man's gotta take his chances with what he knows.

"Government? Naw. They ain't going ta help us. How they going ta make it rain? Besides when the preacher moves out of town the future for aid is bad. That preacher that come last year, Miller Chapel, or whatever his name was, was one of the first to leave when the drought got bad enough an' some of the congregation started talk of moving. Naw. We ain't going ta get any help now that the preacher's gone. We sure need some kind of preacher, a man that knows about the soil. That Chapel fella was from back East somewhere. He's a can-fed fella, if I ever saw one. He was always telling us 'bout some old boy in Europe or Africa or someplace. That preacher was nothing but what other folks said an' not even Americans at that. Fact is, I think he's the one that started talk about leaving the valley.

"How long am I going ta hang on? Till it rains, boy. Till I see some corn sprouting up right out there where the top soil's gone.

"You're welcome, son. I didn't help you much. Sorry.

"No, don't take it off. You keep it an' remember us dirt farmers, folks who gotta hang on ta have anything at all. No, you keep it. If you don't have a handkerchief ta put round your nose an' mouth, you'll cough to death in this dust. We;d have ta plant you right here in this old mother dust, that is, if any of it's left.

"You're right; this here ain't a bad place ta be planted. Hey, if you get a chance put some water on the handkerchief; it helps, that is if you can find some water round these parts. That's a joke ain't it.

You're welcome. What's your eyes smarting for, son? Get some dust in them?"

Robert Lee Schwenck

Why did men like Randolph take time to speak to a small group of seminarians? Perhaps they hope to widen their power through the power of the Church. Perhaps they hope to gain respectability through the ultra respectable Church. Or just possibly they see some link between their aims and the Church's Gospel. I don't know. But if you climb down for a moment from your Barthian tower from which you preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, you must see that these men, whether you agree with their views or not, are speaking about issues which are at the heart of the Gospel - about the dignity of the individual, his rights in society, and his right to achieve his own full humanity. These are areas in which the Gospel is relevant and ought to be heard. I do not plead for your complete agreement - I don't entirely agree myself with the labor movement - but for your concern. At least open yourself to the possibility that the Labor Movement is, perhaps unwittingly, preaching the Gospel in an area where the Church tends to be silent.

John C. Nicol

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"Man is what he eats...All that exists is God's gift to man, and it all exists to make God known to man, to make man's life communion with God...It is divine love made food, made life for man...Man is a hungry being...Behind all the hungers of our life is God...The world is meaningful only when it is the "sacrament" of God's presence...The "original" sin is not primarily that man has "disobeyed" God; the sin is that he ceased to be hungry for him...ceased to see his whole life depending on the whole world as a sacrament of communion with God."

Here is a glimpse of how Alexander Schmemmann presents one aspect of the Greek Orthodox understanding of sacrament. His views are totally new to me. I find it refreshing and fascinating to see my somewhat ingrained concepts viewed from a 180 degree angle. It makes me aware of how culture-bound my theological views are, and of how much intellectual and spiritual growing can be done by studying these concepts.

To be truly man means to be fully oneself. The confirmation is the confirmation of man in his own, unique "personality". It is, to use again the same image, my ordination to be myself, to become what God wants me to be, what He has loved in me from all eternity. It is the gift of vocation. "Confirmation is the opening of man to the wholeness of Divine creation, to the true catholicity of life. This is the 'wind', the ruah of God entering our life, embracing it with fire and love, making us available for Divine action, filling everything with joy and hope..."

Of the Church, Schmemmann has this to say:"It is only as joy that the Church was victorious in the world and it lost the world when it lost the joy, when it ceased to be a witness of it. Of all accusations against Christians, the most terrible one was uttered by Mietszche when he said that Christians had no joy...Feast means joy. Yet, if there is something that we - the serious, adult and frustrated Christians of the twentieth century - look at with suspicion, it is certainly joy. How can one be joyful when so many people suffer? When so many things are to be done? How can one indulge in festivals and celebrations when people expect from us 'serious' answers to their problems? Consciously or subconsciously Christians have accepted the whole ethos of our joyless and business minded culture."

Most interesting is Schmemmann's discussion of the liturgy of the Eucharist, which he describes as a procession. "It is the journey of the Church into the dimension of the Kingdom. We use this word 'dimension' because it seems the best way to indicate the manner of our sacramental entrance into the risen life of Christ...our entrance into the presence of Christ is an entrance into a fourth dimension which allows us to see the ultimate reality of life..." These and other of Schmemmann's concepts presented in "For the Life of the World" will be studied every Thursday at 4:30 and 10:30 p.m. We should all participate in these groups and think deeply about the views of our eastern brethren. Such thought and study has many implications for the Ecumenical movement.

Sandra Boston

Religion and Labor Council of America Seminary Conference
in conjunction with
The AFL - CIO Fifth Constitutional Convention
New York, Monday, November 18, 1963

Probably the closest most of you got to this was to lay aside the relevant section of the New York Times on Sunday, November 17th, and turn to the crucial question of the football scores. Yet in terms of sheer power alone, the AFL-CIO is a force to be reckoned with, representing as it does over thirteen million Americans. To spit out words like "unions" and "labor" as if their place was the gutter, and to mutter darkly and vaguely about "feather-bedding" and "freedom" (surely the most slandered word in the U.S.A.) is to fail to recognize the strength, the ideology, and the vitality of this organization. The aim of this article is to give my impressions of the AFL-CIO Convention and the related Religion and Labor Conference in the hope of stimulating some positive thought about the labor movement and its relation to the Church. These are the impressions of a "foreigner" - you can therefore dismiss them as uninformed or grant them the possibility of an objectivity denied to the nationals.

The Convention met in the plush ballroom of the Americana Hotel. Hundreds of union leaders, disguised as well-fed, complacent business men, lounged at green topped tables creating an atmosphere of affluency and unconcern which would have done justice to an Englishmen's club. A statement on the need for more educational programs by unions could hardly be heard for the subdued murmur of a thousand conversations. But the main business of the day - a motion concerning the crisis in civil rights - brought a sudden and electrifying change in the atmosphere. The place was hushed as A. Philip Randolph, the only negro vice-president of the AFL-CIO, rose to urge the unions to end race curbs. Here are some quotes: "To discuss the civil rights revolution is to write the agenda of labor's unfinished revolution." "The labor movement cannot ignore this under-class. It cannot degenerate into a mere protective association insulating the 'haves' from the 'have nots'." "We cannot accept economic policies which envision $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ unemployment by 1980 when current trends indicate that most of that $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ may be black." This was a man of stature, a living contradiction to the prevalent picture of union men as upstarts on the make. Seventy years old and white haired with a voice of "the resonance of a pipe organ" he carried that vast assembly in a way any preacher would envy. The Convention rose as one man and applauded at the close of his speech. The Convention resolved to eliminate "the last vestiges of racial discrimination from within the ranks of the AFL-CIO and to cooperate with our neighbors in the general community to assure every American the full rights of citizenship."

In the Religion and Labor Conference, which was attended by about fifty seminary students and teachers, speakers attempted to relate the labor movement to the Church. Much of this was superficial and even sub-Christian. Martin Marty would have recognized signs of his American "religion in general." But this was compensated by the forthright and critical analysis of contemporary problems facing the labor movement and society. Walter P. Reuther spoke pointedly of some of these issues: unemployment in a country which is riding on the crest of the economic wave; the need for a positive approach of outreach to meet the challenge of Communism, rather than the negative one of atomic stock-piling; the problems created by automation - "we are training apprentices today for jobs which won't exist in five years"; the crisis facing America because of her material wealth and acquisition of goods - "material wealth is not an end in itself." "The eyes of the world are upon us, not because of what we have, but to see what we are going to do with it." Reuther argued that any way of life can be measured in terms of what it is doing for its young and its old. In the spheres of education, medical care, and security in old age, America stands condemned until her material wealth is put to work for these ideals. These are rights of the individual; his dignity and worth must be respected if this free society is to succeed.

(continued on the following page)

VIEWPOINT

No. 3

December 12, 1963

CHRIST CLIMBED DOWN

Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
there were no rootless Christmas trees
hung with candycanes and breakable stars

Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
there were no gilded Christmas trees
and no tinsel Christmas trees
and no tinfoil Christmas trees
and no pink plastic Christmas trees
and no gold Christmas trees
and no black Christmas trees
and no powderblue Christmas trees
hung with electric candles
and encircled by tin electric trains
and clever cornball relatives

Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
no intrepid Bible salesman
covered the territory
in two-tone Cadillacs
and where no Sears Roebuck creche
complete with plastic babe in manger
arrived by parcel post
and the babe by special delivery
and where no televised Wise Men
praised the Lord Calvert Whisker

Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where

no fat handshaking stranger
in a red flannel suit
and a fake white beard
went around passing himself off
as some sort of North Pole saint
crossing the desert to Bethlehem
Pennsylvania
in a Volkswagen sled
drawn by rollicking Adirondack reindeer
with German names
and bearing sacks of Humble Gifts
from Naks Fifth Avenue
for everybody's imagined Christ child

Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
no Bing Crosby carollers
groaned of a tight Christmas
and where no Radio City angels
ice skated wingless
thru a winter wonderland
into a jingle bell heaven
daily at 8:00
with Midnight Mass matinees

Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and softly stole away into
some anonymous Mary's womb again
where in the darkest night
of everybody's anonymous soul
He awaits again
an unimaginable and impossibly
Immaculate Reconception
the very craziest
of Second Comings

by
Lawrence Ferlinghetti

SOME LIMITS TO THE COURSE OF EVIL

by J. Russell Burck

The fund for Mrs. Lee Harvey Oswald, which the Church and Society Committee has sponsored in recent days, has raised several significant questions. For example, why do we ignore persons in our midst and attend to the needs of persons distant from us? Why do we give money to these persons when there are needs which cash cannot meet?

Certainly it seems that many of us Semirarians have concentrated our concern on persons, movements, and issues far distant from our place of study here in Princeton. Perhaps we also share in the American tendency to define our support for persons in need as the giving of money. To the extent that this fund has acquired these characteristics it is at best a weak expression of concern for Mrs. Oswald. At worst it is a means of compensating for our failure to care even in a monetary way about the problems which are at our very door.

These observations raise a third question, namely, what are we doing by asking the other two questions? One way of asking them is a means of washing our hands of any concrete responsibility whatsoever. We realize that it is not right just to give money or to care only for the distant person; but we do not respond to any of the persons or situations around us. By careful calculation we try to determine who is our neighbor. The danger is that we shall largely withdraw from all.

These questions can serve another purpose. They can point out these past failures (which continue into the present), and they can prod us to respond to this particular person's need. As we think about her need, we realize that there is much that money cannot do. She needs to learn the language we speak, to get a job, perhaps briefly to fade into a Russian-American community in another city. These needs--and the special appeal for money itself--reveal the limitations distance places on our activity. But we could encourage councils of churches and Presbyteries (or comparable judicatories in other denominations) in the area to assist her in ways not open to us. We could also recognize that she and her children may well suffer ostracism and difficulty in gaining employment because of their association with Mr. Oswald. Letters to our home-town newspapers could call attention to these possibilities. They could encourage people to examine their attitudes toward and relationships with persons whose behavior is not socially acceptable or with persons who are related to them. If we took such measures for Mrs. Oswald, other needs closer at hand might move us to thought and action.

In these statements there is no great optimism for sweeping changes in our society--such as the elimination of hatred and violence. Indeed, they do not claim to be motivated by pure love even now. Rather they reflect an awareness of the need in this instance to set some limits to the course of evil within us and around us, such as the following: that we do not let our feelings toward Mr. Oswald prevent us from seeing the needs of his family; that from his background we learn something about the needs of persons whose overt behavior is just barely acceptable and about the shallowness, perversity, and pervasiveness of our moralism; and that we find ourselves judged, forgiven, and commissioned by God in his love toward us.

Our action cannot assure us that we shall be concerned about other people at other times. Perhaps we can acknowledge our propensity to forget by doing just one more thing. We can mark our 1964 calendar at the date, November 22, in the hope that we shall then remember that one year before that date one man killed another and so exposed himself to death and his wife and children to suffering.

WORDS, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN THE SEMINARY

by David Wiley

The reformed seminary student in the 1960's is caught in a trap, - the trap of a theology of the "Word of God," which has been corrupted through too frequent usage. This familiar Johannine image of the Triune God has served the churches through a period of missionary expansion, but it is not serving so well in these latter days of Protestantdom. In spite of its inadequacies, the theology of the Word remains the central image to define the Church's task.

The prime difficulty with the image of Jesus as the Word is that it has excluded other important images of God's activity (Spirit, light, water, life, vine, etc.). Further, its connotations primarily are verbal in a world where words are cheap and action is costly, and its orientation is static in a world of motion.

It is static as it points to the Church as a place - the immobile locus of the Word's presentation in preaching and sacraments. One result of this is that the laity inevitably has a "second class" ministry and ordination, for the laity's task is not the weekly presentation of the words.

The verbal connotations of the Word are seen in the consistent focus of the churches on the preaching and reading of the words. One commentator has noted this in the western intellectual and verbal fascination of American Protestant missions which felt it necessary to create an educated laity capable of Protestant worship. In this verbal definition of the ministry of the Word, the chief task of the clergy is to provide "answers," to speak the proper words, and to manipulate the verbal images. The seminary is created to develop proficiency in these tasks. Here, the task of the laity may be defined as the "spreading of the word," of giving the world "answers." Frequently these are answers to questions not being asked in the world, where men have tired of an infinite stream of promissory words backed neither by action nor commitment.

This rational orientation is understandable, for we are products of academia, which has brought many of us to repeat, "I cannot act until I know." Thus, we spend our time learning and manipulating the words, concepts and theories - always seeking to discover the new formulae and the new expression of the verbal. Thereby, we seek to develop the revised and correct "answers" with which to feed our potential congregations. This activity is bound for failure if: 1) we think we can understand truly without deep and vital contact with the non-ecclesiastical world outside the seminary or 2) we believe we can understand fully before we can act.

By definition, a seminary is a place to gain understanding and growth. The Latin seminarium designated a "seed-plot" or a "nursery." This raises for us the question: what type of earth shall be chosen to nourish our seeds of understanding and direction? The soil frequently used is the potted soil of 19th Century western culture, and the fruits of that growth characteristically answer the questions raised by that century. Thus, we most frequently attract those who ask the sort of questions for which we are prepared to give answers.

This is not to say that seed will not grow in this soil of the past, especially if we assure careful hot-house conditions of separation from the

"worldly" environment and continual nurture with 19th century language and theology. There, the seeds will grow and blossom into ever new formulae. But such blossoms are incapable of continued life in the world once the three-year period of growth has ended, unless another institution carefully re-creates the original environment of growth. Only a seed - an orientation - grown in the wild soil of the natural world with all its impertinent questions, tensions, and upheaval can survive to grow and reproduce in the life of 20th century man. The hot-house product is a dead-end, even though its attraction for many brethren is evident.

The problem of us seminarians is that our imminent expectation to serve the contemporary ecclesiastical institution often dictates our "discovery" of premature and unhelpful answers to the problems of our churches and society, thereby inherently favoring the simpler and reductionist formulae. Further, the greater danger is that we define the problems with which we are concerned within the hot-house.

My thesis is that there may be no "answers" for us at this time, and that all verbal formulae may be inadequate in this period of transition. Furthermore, our ministries can be relevant and obedient in this situation only if we seek to solve not only the problems of the churches but of the world as well. Only as we deal with the hard problems of this needy planet can our message be of service. Our message increasingly must exclude the easy generalizations and platitudes that characterize our evasions of the concrete issues of cultural values, politics and society.

Perhaps the key issue facing us today and to which we are saying little or nothing is the question of American wealth and human need - the politico-economic question. It takes a multitude of forms. First, it is a matter of distribution of wealth. In our nation the poorest 56% of the population owns only 6% of the wealth. American wealth and world hunger sets the larger scene. Second, it is a matter of inadequate public services for our nation's million migrants, for our $4\frac{1}{2}$ million problem drinkers, for the 50,000 narcotics addicts, for the chronically unemployed, for Negroes, for the sick and aged, and for refugees. To cite one dramatic instance, it is estimated that between two and ten thousand citizens of the U.S.A. die annually due to kidney failure, many of whom could be saved were there a source of money for equipment and the \$7,000/year/patient operation costs. That money is not available in a year when conspicuous consumption has reached an all-time high. Third, it is a matter of employment. One expert has estimated that as many as 40,000 jobs are being alienated by automation each week. Perhaps that is too high, but others estimate as many as 10 million unemployed by 1970. Fourth, it is a matter of simple poverty and hunger. It is estimated that 10,000 humans die each day of malnutrition. Each day, on the average, you and I eat almost four times the amount of food eaten by the average Indian. (Is it any wonder some foreign guests gag at our easy affluence.) Nor can we claim constructive action on the program in the face of the recently continuing reduction of the already minute U. S. foreign aid and loan programs.

The statistics soon cease to have meaning, for they are inanimate, but each statistic is a person in need - one who embodies the call of our Lord to give the cup of water and bind up the broken body. These are needs from which we never are freed of responsibility, neither by virtue of our status as students, nor by our lack of a complete and total solution.

If we face these problems, we shall not find our salvation in social involvement. Neither can we use a pragmatic social activism to escape dilligent intellectual struggle, to preach better sermons and to understand better the witness of the Bible and Theology. Nor are we to find a new religion in an easy acceptance of secularity or identification of Christ and culture. Least of all are we free to retreat into our own in-group or an exhilarating pneumatology. I mean simply that the existence of such great and growing human need dictates that we break our cloistered confinement and enter the struggle with concrete political action to discover individual and institutional paths toward solutions. There, in the response to human need, dealing with needs, people, and institutions rather than theological abstractions, we shall find ourselves asking more relevant questions, for which our educations should help to provide answers. And there we may discover what the Spirit of God is doing anew in our day.

Proposition: In this period, our education is proportional to our involvement and inversely proportional to our talk.

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"The Pastor and Civil Rights"

On Wednesday, December 4th, the Church and Society Committee under the chairmanship of John Bowe, sponsored a panel discussion on the topic: "The pastor and Civil Rights." The panel was led by Dr. Gayraud Wilmore, Chairman of the General Assembly's Commission on Religion and Race, and included Dr. Benjamin J. Anderson, pastor of the Witherspoon Church in Princeton, Dr. Paul Ramsey, chairman of the religion department at Princeton University, and Dr. M. Richard Shaull. Dr. James Hastings Nichols moderated the panel, whose discussion began with a speech by Dr. Wilmore summerizing the aims and activities of his commission as they relate to the clergyman in the parish situation. The commission is concerned not only with supporting pastors in their struggles for equal rights in their communities, but with aiding pastors who have been or are about to be "disenfranchised" by their congregations for such activity. To implement with specifics what Dr. Wilmore said, Dr. Anderson spoke from the position of a particular pastor in a local situation. He maintained that the duty of the pastor was to be convinced of what the gospel of Jesus Christ had to say to his people where they were, and then to act in accordance with it. This would mean that he would on occasions find himself affiliated with the aims of one interest group or another; but he should always keep foremost in his mind that his allegiance was to the ministry of the Church -- and that ministry was to all people, not just those militant or influential in their demands. To which Dr. Ramsey countered that he was convinced that some of the civil rights protests in which clergymen were involved were simply staged for publicity. Wilmore agreed that this was true in all areas of church activity, which should not, however, deter honest demonstrations. More debate followed. At the end of an exhilarating hour, many questions had been asked, and few answers given. The auditors, none of whom went away sorrowing, are perhaps yet wrestling with the answers.

Gilbert J. Horn

All through the gray winter in Philadelphia
teaching church school classes in a store-front
to black children coming without breakfast
from homes without fathers.

Brooding over a social system that creates and maintains
such squalid ghettos,
surrounded by an hygienic, Caucasian ring
of conspicuous consumption
and local-churches-made-good,
after they fled from the spreading blight
and the press of unorganized humanity at the city's heart.

Now in the city the cathedrals stand dark and silent.

Has Christ forsaken the city--
that monstrous, hard-surface creation of twentieth-century man,
breeder of crime and culture?

Or have His chosen ones in a panic
of confusion and unfamiliar circumstances
avoided the great compassionate eyes
and the outstretched healing arms
and fled into the artificial serenity of the suburb,
leaving behind the hungry ones
to fall prey to economic wolves
and the inward forces of degradation?

No, still Christ calls, and challenges His servants
to cut through centuries of institutional veneer
to the core of the gracious good news of the forgiveness of sins
and the love that will not let us go.

Let men of good will work with the same intensity as the agents of evil,
trusting that the Lord of Hosts is working
to perfect through us His gracious will for all mankind.

Anonymous



